

Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee
November 19, 2015
Acton Memorial Library

Members Present: Peter Ashton (Chair), Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Walter Foster, Paula Goodwin, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Joe Will (Clerk)

Others Present: Kristen Guichard (Acton Assistant Planner), Roland Bourdon (Finance Committee observer), Michaela Moran (President, Iron Work Farm), Anne Forbes (Secretary, Iron Work Farm)

Peter A opened the meeting at 7:36 PM.

I. Citizen Concerns

- None.

II. Appointment - Iron Work Farm (IWF)

- Michaela and Anne presented information on IWF (Jones Tavern and Faulkner Homestead) in South Acton with the hope that the CPC will be able to advise and assist IWF in figuring out how the CPA could possibly help IWF accomplish what it hopes to accomplish. Projects envisioned include a Jones Tavern Master Plan, and for the Faulkner Homestead a survey and appraisal of its 6 acres, and some new construction. Each building currently has a single tenant, and perhaps affordable housing could be a basis for some CPA funding. CPC volunteers for liaison work with IWF include Walter, Ken (for housing in particular), Susan (also President of the Acton Conservation Trust), and Tory (as member of the Acton Historical Commission). The CPC also encouraged IWF to talk with the Acton Open Space Committee, and Nancy Tavernier of the Acton Community Housing Corporation. IWF is thinking of applying next year for CPA funding.

III. Minutes of October 22, 2015

- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes with two corrections (2 date changes and one word insertion).

IV. Review Applications and Assign Liaisons

- 13 project proposals were submitted by the 11/16 deadline, two as placeholders. Of the latter, it was moved, seconded and voted 7-0 with Ken abstaining, to accept the proposal from the South Acton Congregational Church (SACC). No action was taken on a placeholder proposal from the Recreation Department.

Tonight's CPC tasks for each proposal are to 1) assign a CPC member liaison, 2) determine whether the project needs legal review, and 3) set a date and time for the project presentation.

Actions on Tasks 1-3 appear in "Community Preservation Fund Applications for 2016" DocuShare file <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-6633>.

(Note: The file shows "No" legal review is needed for the Acton Congregational Church (ACC) Master Plan proposal. Per meeting notes, that should be "Yes".)

It was pointed out that the Acton Board of Selectmen (BoS) voted to move forward all the projects from Town offices (i.e., the BoS felt all projects were worthy of CPC consideration) but did not prioritize them (because of questioning of the validity of last year's prioritization exercise). Also, two Town proposals presented to the BoS from Natural Resources (NR) were withdrawn because NR has found other ways to fund them.

This year's CPA amount with the State match but without turnback moneys is about \$1.1M. The proposals request a total of \$2.43M.

Ken, currently an officer of the ACC, will not participate in any discussion/decisions for the ACC proposals or any proposals bidding for the same money as ACC (i.e. historic preservation dollars) based on advice from a lawyer with the Ethics Commission. Ken's term as an ACC officer ends at the end of January. Per the legal advice, as a regular member (not an officer) of the church, he would need to file a declaration to that effect, and then as long as he could be fair and impartial, he could participate in the deliberations and decisions regarding those applications.

Peter B's wife (not Peter himself) being an active member of the SACC, nor Walter having friends who go to church, were deemed sufficient reason for either of them to excuse themselves from participating in discussions involving the church projects.

The CPC members also had comments re some of the projects, and these likely will be shared with presenters before or during the coming presentation meetings.

V. Update - CPA Study Committee (SC)

- Peter B reports that the SC has 10 people and is moving forward. The SC reviewed minutes from the 06/11/15 CPC meeting to better understand its purpose. He expects there will be a "good" report for the BoS in January and it will be a basis for any report at the April Town Meeting.

Roland Bartl has put together a list of CPA accomplishments. The "big question" is if we raise the CPA surcharge rate, what projects that are not getting funded now will be funded when there would be more funds available?

The SC desires to hear from various parties, including Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition (later confirming availability to meet with the SC on 12/14/15), Peter A of the Acton Open Space Committee, and Bill Klauer and Tory of the Acton Historical Commission.

If there is to be an increase in the CPA surcharge, it has to pass Town Meeting first and an election afterward. The election would be the U.S. presidential election, so there would be a good turnout.

VI. Project Reports and Updates

- Rail trails — Bruce Freeman: Clearing the way is proceeding. Assabet River: Out for bid, so now it's in the State's hands. Hopefully, work will start in early summer, 2016.

VII. Administrative updates

- None.

9:05 pm — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.